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The situation in the Middle East

Right of peoples to self-determination

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Note verbale dated 31 May 2007 from the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and, with reference to its note dated 6 January 2007, has the honour to attach a letter concerning the health situation of Mr. Saitan Nemr Al-Wali, a Syrian detainee in the Nafha Israeli prison (see annex).

It would be greatly appreciated if the present note and its annex were circulated as a document of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly under agenda items 13 and 66, and of the Security Council.

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Annex to the note verbale dated 31 May 2007 from the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Arabic]

I am writing to you to inform you of the circumstances of the arbitrary and illegal detention of Saytan Nimr al-Waliy, a Syrian prisoner from the occupied Syrian Golan, who is being held in solitary confinement in the Israeli Nafha prison. He was sentenced to 27 years in prison on the charge of refusing Israeli identity and insisting on retaining his Syrian citizenship.

As you know, the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Geneva Conventions of 1949, and relevant United Nations resolutions, in particular Security Council resolution 497 (1981), which deemed the annexation by Israel, the occupying Power, of the Syrian Golan and efforts to alter its character null and void — all these obligate Israel not to expose the inhabitants of the occupied territory to any threat and to comply with the binding rules of international law in this regard. Consequently, Israeli practices in this context violate the Charter of the United Nations, basic human rights principles and Security Council resolutions, and Israel is therefore accountable for them under the Charter.

The health condition of prisoner Saytan Nimr al-Waliy is cause for extreme concern. He has spent 22 years in Israeli detention being slowly murdered through the deliberate neglect of his health situation by the prison administration. He has now become swollen and unable to walk or even speak, and is currently living on artificial respiration.

My delegation calls on you, and through you on the United Nations and relevant bodies, to pressure Israel to provide necessary treatment to the prisoner immediately and to allow representatives of the International Red Cross, accompanied by doctors qualified to monitor his health condition, to visit him with a view to his release, along with 20 other comrades who have been held in Israeli prisons for more or less 22 years and who are also suffering from extremely serious medical conditions. We recall in this regard the inhumane detention conditions that led to the death of Syrian prisoner Hayil Abu Zayd in 2005 after the United Nations and International Committee of the Red Cross obtained his release from prison.

Practices violating all humanitarian standards that are being perpetrated by Israel, the occupying Power, in many areas of the Syrian Golan, including arbitrary detention and unparalleled mistreatment of prisoners, must be re-evaluated and recognized for what they are, and efforts to reject, resist and expose them must be renewed so that they will not be continued in future.

My delegation would be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the United Nations and distributed to the President of the General Assembly and the President and members of the Security Council. May I remind you that we raised the issue of prisoner Saytan Waliy and other Syrian detainees from the occupied Syrian Golan with Mr. Michael Williams, your personal envoy to the Middle East, at one of our meetings with him on 19 January 2007 and he promised us that he would make all possible efforts in this regard. Our delegation

also previously brought his case up in our note of 6 January 2006 in which we raised the tragic conditions of Syrian detainees from the occupied Syrian Golan being held in Israeli prisons.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative